



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

श्रीमद्भगवत् गीता
गुणत्रय विभाग योगः

Chapter 14
Volume 3

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत ।

rajastamaścābhibhūya sattvaṁ bhavati bhārata ।

रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्थता ॥

14-10

rajaḥ sattvaṁ tamaścaiva tamaḥ sattvaṁ rajasthatā ॥

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन् प्रकाश उपजायते ।

sarvadvāreṣu dehe'smin prakāśa upajāyate ।

ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्यात् विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥

14-11

jñānaṁ yadā tadā vidyāt vivṛddhaṁ sattvamityuta ॥

लोभः प्रवृत्तिः आरम्भः कर्मणाम् अशमः स्पृहा ।

lobhaḥ pravṛttiḥ ārambhaḥ karmaṇām aśamaḥ sprhā ।

रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥

14-12

rajasyetāni jāyante vivṛddhe bharatarṣabha ॥

अप्रकाशो अप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च ।

aprakāśo apravṛttiśca pramādo moha eva ca ।

तमसि एतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ॥

14-13

tamasi etāni jāyante vivṛddhe kurunandana ॥

यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धेतु प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।

yadā sattve pravṛddhetu pralayaṁ yāti dehabhṛt ।

तदा उत्तमविदां लोकान् अमलान् प्रतिपद्यते ॥

14-14

tadā uttamavidāṁ lokān amalān pratipadyate ॥

रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसङ्घिषु जायते ।

rajasi pralayaṁ gatvā karmasaṅgiṣu jāyate ।

तथा प्रलीनः तमसि मूढयोनिषु जायते ॥

14-15



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

tathā pralīnaḥ tamasi mūḍhayoniṣu jāyate ॥

Sri Krishna has been talking about the three माया गुणs *māyā guṇas*, the सत्त्व *satva*, रजस् *rajas* and तमस् गुणs *tamas guṇas*, and their manifestations, and how a person with no आत्मज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṁ* – Self-knowledge gets bound by these गुणs *guṇas* in one's daily life. The स्वभाव *svabhāva* of every person is a mixture of all these three गुणs *guṇas* to different ever-changing extents. There is, however, a natural sequence of combinations of these three गुणs *guṇas*, called गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*, with respect to the dominating power of each of these गुणs *guṇas* in their integrated manifestations at any given time. Indicating this natural sequential order, गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत ।

rajastamaścābhibhūya sattvaṁ bhavati bhārata ।

रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्थता ॥

14-10

rajah sattvaṁ tamaścaiva tamah sattvaṁ rajasthatā ॥

भारत *bhārata* – O! Arjuna, there is a four-fold order with respect to the natural sequence of combinations of these three गुणs *guṇas* in their integrated manifestations. This four-fold order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*, is as follows:

1. Predominantly सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa*, associated with much less रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*, and far less तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*
2. Predominantly रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*, associated with much less सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* and far less तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*
3. Again, predominantly रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*, associated with much less तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* and far less सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa*, and
4. Predominantly तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*, associated with much less रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* and far less सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa*.

In the words of Sri Krishna, the four-fold sequential order, गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga* is as follows:

1. रजः तमः च अभिभूय, सत्त्वं भवति *rajah tamah ca abhibhūya sattvaṁ bhavati*



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

2. सत्त्वं तमः च अभिभूय, रजः भवति तथा *sattvaṁ tamaḥ ca abhibhūya, rajaḥ bhavati tathā* - Similarly
3. तमः सत्त्वं च अभिभूय, रजः भवति *tamaḥ sattvaṁ ca abhibhūya, rajaḥ bhavati* and
4. रजः सत्त्वं च अभिभूय, तमः भवति *rajaḥ sattvaṁ ca abhibhūya, tamaḥ bhavati*

अभिभूय *abhibhūya* means dominating, overpowering. भवति *bhavati* means उद्भवति *udbhavati* – rises above, manifests itself. Therefore रजः तमः च अभिभूय, सत्त्वं भवति *rajaḥ tamaḥ ca abhibhūya sattvaṁ bhavati* means overpowering रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* and तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*, the सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* manifests itself naturally and dominantly, which means when the सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* predominates in a person, the distinguishing nature of सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa*, namely विवेक ज्ञानं *viveka jñānaṁ* – discriminating knowledge, purity and clarity of thought, word and expression manifest themselves naturally and predominantly, while the characteristics of रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*, namely actions propelled by cravings and attachments for various objects and experiences, are held under strict control, and also the characteristics of तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*, namely mental and physical dispositions of ignorance, laziness and indifference, are held under even greater control by the overpowering nature of सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* in its integrated manifestations. Thus, this सत्त्व-रजस्-तमस् *satva-rajas-tamas* sequential combination is the first order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*. The next order is

सत्त्वं तमः च अभिभूय, रजः भवति *sattvaṁ tamaḥ ca abhibhūya, rajaḥ bhavati* – Overpowering सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* and तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*, the रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* manifests itself naturally and dominantly, which means, when the रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* predominates in a person, the distinguishing characteristic of रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*, namely, overriding commitment to craving and attachment-propelled actions manifests itself naturally and dominantly while the characteristics of सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* and तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* are held under strict and even stricter control respectively, by the overpowering nature of रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*. Thus, this रजस्-सत्त्व-तमस् *rajas-satva-tamas* sequential combination is the second order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*. The next order is



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

तमः सत्त्वं च अभिभूय, रजः भवति *tamaḥ sattvaṁ ca abhibhūya, rajaḥ bhavati* – Overpowering तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* and सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa*, the रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* manifests itself naturally and dominantly, which means when this रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* predominates in a person, the distinguishing characteristic of रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*, namely the overriding commitment to कर्म *karma*, propelled by cravings and attachments, manifests itself naturally and dominantly, while the characteristics of तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* and सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* are held under strict and even stricter controls respectively, by the overpowering nature of रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*. Thus this रजस्-तमस्-सत्त्व *rajas-tamas-satva* sequential combination is the third order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*.

The important difference between the second order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga* and the third order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga* must be understood. In both orders, the रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* is predominant, but the integrated manifestations of the रजस् गुण *rajas guṇas* are vastly different because the relative positions, extents and consequent levels of freedom of expression of the associated सत्त्व *satva* and तमस् गुण *tamas guṇas* in each order. In the second order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*, the सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* component is relatively far more than the तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* component, and the freedom of expression of the सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* component is also relatively far greater than that of the तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* component. On the other hand, in the third order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*, the situation is reverse. The तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* component is relatively far more than the सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* component, and the freedom of expression of the तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* component is also relatively far greater than that of the सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* component.

Because of the above differences, the predominant रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* is modified so differently that the integrated manifestations of the second order and the third order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāgas* are vastly different. Now, about the fourth order.

रजः सत्त्वं च अभिभूय, तमः भवति *rajaḥ sattvaṁ ca abhibhūya, tamaḥ bhavati* – Overpowering the रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* and सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa*, the तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* manifests itself naturally and dominantly, which means when the तमस्



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

गुण *tamas guṇa* predominates in a person, the distinguishing characteristics of तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*, namely ignorance, laziness and indifference manifest themselves naturally and dominantly, while the characteristics of रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* and सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* are held under strict and even stricter control respectively by the overpowering nature of तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa*. Thus this तमस्-रजस्-सत्त्व *tamas-rajas-satva* sequential combination is the fourth order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*.

The natural sequential four-order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga* described above is the basis for the four-fold कर्म विभाग *karma vibhāga* – occupational divisions, in the Vedic society, about which Sri Krishna talks later in Chapter 18 (18-41 to 44, see also 4-13). Within the scope of this four-order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*, there are infinite in-between variations, each with its own unique combination of गुण *guṇas*, which naturally account for the infinite varieties of people and their occupations in human society. The स्वभाव *svabhāva* of every one of us is a unique combination of the three गुण *guṇas* at any given time. Every person is different from every other person only in terms of one's unique गुण *guṇa* combination, the predominance of a particular गुण *guṇa* in that combination, and the integrated manifestation of that गुण *guṇa* combination at any given time.

Now, how to know which गुण *guṇa* predominates in a person at any given time? भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

सर्वद्वारेषु देहेऽस्मिन् प्रकाश उपजायते ।

sarvadvāreṣu dehe'smin prakāśa upajāyate ।

ज्ञानं यदा तदा विद्यात् विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥ 14-11

jñānaṁ yadā tadā vidyāt vivṛddhaṁ sattvamityuta ॥

अस्मिन् देहे सर्वद्वारेषु यदा प्रकाशः उपजायते *asmin dehe sarvadvāreṣu yadā prakāśah upajāyate* – When the light of knowledge emanates in this body from all the gates of knowledge, from all the available means of knowledge in this body

तदा विद्यात् *tadā vidyāt* – then, one may understand that

उत *uta* – indeed



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

सत्त्वं विवृद्धं (उद्भूतं) इति *sattvaṃ vivṛddham udbhūtaṃ iti* – the सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* has gained enough strength to manifest itself predominantly.

The gates of knowledge in one's body are the five ज्ञान इन्द्रियसु *jñāna indriyas*, namely the ear, the skin, the eyes, the tongue and the nose, along with mind and the बुद्धि *buddhi*. When one's sense organs, mind and बुद्धि *buddhi* are alert and focused, and through their means, knowledge of some kind, any kind, shines forth, and brought into manifestation in one's awareness, then indeed, the सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* predominates in that person at that time, which simply means that the ability to gain knowledge of some kind, any kind, is the indication for the predominance of सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* in a person.

Similarly, about रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*, भगवान् *bhagavān* says:

लोभः प्रवृत्तिः आरम्भः कर्मणाम् अशमः स्पृहा ।

lobhaḥ pravṛttiḥ ārambhaḥ karmaṇām aśamaḥ sprhā ।

रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥ 14-12

rajasyetāni jāyante vivṛddhe bharatarṣabha ॥

भरतर्षभ *bharatarṣabha* – O! Arjuna

लोभः *lobhaḥ* – greediness, an intense desire or craving for something that legitimately belongs to someone else, and

कर्मणाम् प्रवृत्तिः *karmaṇām pravṛttiḥ* – physical restlessness arising from an ever-expanding or unnecessary or uncalled for activities of various kinds, and

कर्मणाम् आरम्भः *karmaṇām ārambhaḥ* – a continuous urge to start new projects and new undertakings for accomplishing objectives propelled by desires and attachments of various kinds, and

कर्मणाम् अशमः *karmaṇām aśamaḥ* – mental restlessness arising from desire propelled, objective oriented activities of all kinds, and also

स्पृहा *sprhā* – a craving, a longing for something or other at all times

रजसि विवृद्धे एतानि जायन्ते *rajas vivṛddhe etāni jāyante* – all these arise and manifest themselves when रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* predominates.

Thus, greediness, physical and mental restlessness arising from object-oriented activities, propelled by desires and attachments of various kinds, a continuous urge to



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

undertake new projects, and a craving or longing for something or other at all times, these are the indications of the predominance of रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa*. These indications are common for both the second order and third order गुण विभागs *guṇa vibhāgas*, even though their explicit manifestations are very different for each of them. Further,

अप्रकाशो अप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च ।

aprakāśo aprvṛttiśca pramādo moha eva ca ।

तमसि एतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ॥ 14-13

tamasi etāni jāyante vivṛddhe kurunandana ॥

कुरुनन्दन *kurunandana* – O! Arjuna

अप्रकाशः *aprakāśah*, अप्रवृत्तिः *aprvṛttih*, प्रमादः *pramādah*, मोहः *mohah* – these are the indications when तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* predominates

अप्रकाशः *aprakāśah* – is lack of विवेक ज्ञानं *viveka jñānam* – discriminating knowledge with respect to proper conduct and improper conduct in daily life

अप्रवृत्तिः *aprvṛttih* – is general dullness or sluggishness in the activities of every kind

प्रमादः *pramādah* – is general laziness and indifference , and

मोहः *mohah* – is mental delusion and confusion caused by one's inability to use one's natural intellect

तमसि विवृद्धे एतानि जायन्ते *tamasi vivṛddhe etāni jāyante* – all these are born, and they manifest themselves when तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* predominates.

Simple ignorance of what is right and what is wrong, and lack of विवेक बुद्धि *viveka buddhi*, a general dullness in all activities, laziness and indifference and mental confusion arising from one's inability to use one's natural intellect - these are the indications of the predominance of तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* in a person.

Further, the effects of one's गुणs *guṇas* are not limited to one's present life. They continue to manifest themselves in one form or another, from one life to the next. Therefore, भगवान् *bhagavān* says

यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे तु प्रलयं याति देहभृत् ।

yadā sattve pravṛddhe tu pralayaṁ yāti dehabhṛt ।



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

तदा उत्तमविदां लोकान् अमलान् प्रतिपद्यते ॥ 14-14
tadā uttamavidāṁ lokān amalān pratipadyate ॥

तु *tu* – Further

यदा सत्त्वे प्रवृद्धे *yadā sattve pravṛddhe*, देहभृत् याति *dehabhṛt yāti* – at the time when सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* is predominant, if the जीव *jīva* (देहभृत् *dehabhṛt*) leaves the body, which means, if the person dies when सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* is predominant तदा *tadā* – then

उत्तमविदां लोकान् अमलान् प्रतिपद्यते *uttamavidāṁ lokān amalān pratipadyate*
प्रतिपद्यते *pratipadyate* – the जीव *jīva* gains, the person gains

अमलान् लोकान् *amalān lokān* – the world free from impurities and experiences free from पाप *pāpa*, and that world is उत्तमविदां लोकान् *uttamavidāṁ lokān* – the worlds of those who are endowed with the highest level of awareness, in other words, the worlds of ज्ञानीस *jñānīs* and योगीस *yogīs*.

Here we must realize that if only one's life has been predominantly one of सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* throughout one's life, then alone सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* will predominate at the time of death. Whatever one's thought life is throughout one's life, that is what it is going to be at the end. No one can suddenly gain सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* at the time of death.

If सत्त्व *satva* predominates at the time of one's death, the next birth for the person will be in अमलान् लोकान् *amalān lokān* meaning पाप रहित लोकान् *pāpa rahita lokān* – the worlds of experience free from पाप *pāpa*, and that is उत्तमविदां लोकान् *uttamavidāṁ lokān*, meaning उत्तमविदां समूहान् *uttamavidāṁ samūhān* – the societies of wise people, ज्ञानीस *jñānīs* and योगीस *yogīs*. That means, the person will be reborn in societies conducive to gaining ईश्वर ज्ञानं *īśvara jñānaṁ* – आत्मज्ञानं *ātma jñānaṁ*, and hence मोक्ष *mokṣa* – absolute liberation, freedom and happiness.

That is also what भगवान् *bhagavān* said earlier in Chapter 6.

प्रप्य पुण्यकृतां, लोकान् उषित्वा शश्वतीः समाः ।
prapya puṇyakṛtāṁ lokān uṣitvā śaśvatīḥ samāḥ ।



ब्रह्मविद्या Brahma Vidya

शुचीनां श्रमितां गेहे योगभ्रष्टः अभिजायते ॥ 6-41
śucīnām śramitām gehe, yoga bhraṣṭaḥ abhijāyate ॥

अथवा योगिनामेव, कुले भवति धीमताम् ।
athavā yogi nāmeva, kule bhavati dhīmatām । 6-42

The one for whom सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* is predominant, after having lived a long life of सुख *sukha* and ज्ञानं *jñānam*, is again born in शुचीनां श्रमितां गेहे *śucīnām śramitām gehe* – in a house where the family is both pure and wealthy, means materially prosperous. अथवा *athavā* – or, the person is straight away reborn in a family of योगीसु *yogis*, who are, by their very nature, धीमताम् *dhīmatām* – means बुद्धिमताम् *buddhimatām* – well informed and wise, committed to the pursuit of आत्मज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge. On the other hand

रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा कर्मसङ्गिषु जायते ।
rajasi pralayaṁ gatvā karmasaṅgiṣu jāyate ।
तथा प्रलीनः तमसि मूढयोनिषु जायते ॥ 14-15
tathā pralīnaḥ tamasi mūḍhayoniṣu jāyate ॥

रजसि प्रलयं गत्वा *rajasi pralayaṁ gatvā* – If रजस् गुण *rajas guṇa* is predominant in a person at the time of death कर्मसङ्गिषु जायते *karma saṅgiṣu jāyate* – the person is reborn among people committed to a life of कर्मसु *karmas* - actions propelled by the forces of राग *raga* and द्वेष *dveṣa* – likes, dislikes, power, ambition, etc.

तथा *tathā* – similarly

तमसि प्रलीनः *tamasi pralīnaḥ* – if तमस् गुण *tamas guṇa* is predominant in a person at the time of death

मूढयोनिषु जायते *mūḍhayoniṣu jāyate* – the person is reborn in families who are totally ignorant of even the very existence of Self-knowledge.

मूढ *mūḍha* – here is with respect to आत्मज्ञानं *ātma jñānam* – Self-knowledge.

From all that has been said so far, it should be clear that it is entirely within one's power to make one गुण *guṇa* predominant over the other two in one's life. Cultivating



Hindu Temple of Ottawa-Carleton Inc.
4835 Bank Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1X 1G6

ब्रह्मविद्या **Brahma Vidya**

appropriate discipline and values, everyone can, and indeed, every one should, uplift oneself to the predominance of सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* – the first order गुण विभाग *guṇa vibhāga*, which is the most helpful in uplifting oneself from the hold of all गुण *guṇas*, including the सत्त्व गुण *satva guṇa* itself. Such total upliftment of oneself from the hold of all गुण *guṇas*, is indeed gaining मोक्ष *mokṣa*.

We will continue next time.